

Message Text

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UNCLAS RABAT 1093

USIA FOR IPS, IBS, IOP, INA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, MO
SUBJECT: MOROCCAN REPLY TO NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL

1. FOLLOWING REPLY TO NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL ON U.S.
ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO "WRONG COIN FOR MOROCCO" WAS CARRIED
BY NATIONAL NEWS SERVICE MAP FEB. 17 AND REPRINTED IN ALL
PRO-GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPERS FEB. 18:

2. BEGIN TEXT. I WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION
THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS TO THE ARTICLE "WRONG COIN FOR
MOROCCO" PUBLISHED FEB. 6, 1978.

3. HIS MAJESTY HASSAN II APPROVED SADAT'S HISTORIC
GESTURE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 1974 RABAT SUMMIT AND
THE "SPIRIT" OF RABAT, SOLELY IN THE INTEREST OF THE ARAB
NATION AND ABOVE ALL, THE CAUSE OF PEACE. IF HIS MAJESTY
HAD COME OUT AGAINST SADAT'S HISTORIC INITIATIVE, HIS ATTI-
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TUDE WOULD SURELY HAVE MET WITH THE CONDEMNATION OF
WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. INSOFAR AS THE QUESTION OF
MOROCCAN SAHARA IS CONCERNED, SPAIN AGREED IN
NOVEMBER 1975 TO CEDE SAHARA TO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA
AND TO EVACUATE ITS TROOPS IN FEBRUARY 1976. MEANWHILE
THE SAHARAN POPULATIONS HAD TIME TO EXPRESS THEIR SELF-
DETERMINATION. MR. KHATRI OULD SIDI SAID AL JOUMANI,

PRESIDENT OF THE SAHARAN JEMAA (LOCAL ASSEMBLY) AND A MEMBER OF THE SPANISH CORTES ARRIVED SECRETLY IN AGADIR ACCOMPANIED BY OTHER SAHARAN TRIBAL LEADERS AND SWORE HIS ALLEGIANCE TO HIS MAJESTY HASSAN II.

4. THE MADRID TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT HAVING BEEN SIGNED ON NOV. 19, 1975, A TRIPARTITE ADMINISTRATION WAS SET UP ALONGSIDE THE JEMAA, BUT AS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SAHARA, THE DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE JEMAA WERE TO BE CONSIDERED AS REPRESENTING THOSE OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE. A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MADRID AGREEMENT WAS VOTED BY THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON DEC. 10, 1975. THE JEMAA APPROVED THE MADRID AGREEMENT FEB. 26, 1976. THE ONLY REMAINING PROBLEM FOR MOROCCO IS THAT OF THE REGION'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WHICH WAS TOTALLY NEGLECTED BY THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES. SINCE 1975 WE HAVE SEEN A RADICAL CHANGE, AS MUCH SOCIAL AS ECONOMIC, IN THE AREA OF THE REINTEGRATED SAHARA. MOROCCO HAS DONE MORE IN TWO YEARS FOR ITS SAHARAN POPULATIONS THAN WAS DONE IN FIFTY YEARS OF COLONIZATION AND THE SAHARAN POPULATIONS ARE NOW LIVING UNDER MUCH IMPROVED CONDITIONS.

5. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO COME VISIT MOROCCO AND OBSERVE THE TRUTH FOR YOURSELF. AFTER READING YOUR ARTICLE, THE READER HAS A DISTORTED VIEW OF THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION. I HOPE YOU WILL PUBLISH THIS LETTER. SIGNED, MOHAMED LARBI
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KHATTABI, MINISTER OF INFORMATION. END TEXT.ANDERSON

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